4.2.6.8 Socioeconomics

No Action Alternative

Regional Economy Characteristics. Total employment in the REA is projected to increase approximately 1 percent annually between 1995 and 2000, reaching about 257,000 in the latter year. Long-term projections indicate slower growth after the year 2000, when employment would increase by less than 1 percent annually and reach approximately 354,500 persons in 2040. Unemployment in the REA was 6.7 percent in 1994 and is expected to remain at this level into the near future. Per capita income is projected to increase from approximately $17,332 in 1995 to $25,297 in 2040. Projections for the No Action Alternative are presented in Table L.1–55.

Population and Housing. Population in the ROI is projected to increase from approximately 457,500 in 1995 to 640,200 by 2040. The total number of available housing units in the ROI is projected to increase from about 171,400 in 1995 to 239,700 in 2040. Population and housing projections for the No Action Alternative are presented in Tables L.1–56 and L.1–57, respectively.

Community Services. Education, public safety, and health care characteristics are used to assess the level of community services in the SRS ROI. School enrollments are projected to increase from about 86,730 students in 1995 to 121,620 students by 2040. The current student-to-teacher ratio is 17.5:1. To maintain this level of service, the number of teachers in the ROI would need to increase from approximately 4,966 in 1995 to 6,948 in 2040. These projections are presented in Tables L.1–58 and L.1–59.

The projected number of sworn police officers and firefighters serving in ROI communities over the period 1995 to 2040 are shown in Tables L.1–60 and L.1–61, respectively. Under No Action, the number of sworn police officers is projected to increase from approximately 952 in 1995 to 1,322 in 2040 to maintain the current service level of 2.1 sworn officers per 1,000 persons. The number of firefighters in the ROI would need to increase from about 1,363 in 1995 to 1,919 in 2040 to maintain the current service level of 3.0 firefighters per 1,000 persons.

Hospital occupancy rates are based on current capacity. These rates and the estimated number of practicing physicians serving the ROI population between 1995 and 2040 are presented in Tables L.1–62 and L.1–63, respectively. Hospital occupancy rates are projected to increase from approximately 65 percent in 1995 to 90 percent in 2040. To maintain the current service level of 3.0 physicians per 1,000 persons, the total number of physicians in the ROI would need to increase from approximately 1,350 in 1995 to 1,848 in 2040.

Local Transportation. Any increases in traffic would be due to projected growth in the area unrelated to DOE activities. [Text deleted.]

Upgrade Alternative

Preferred Alternative: Upgrade With Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site Non-Pit Plutonium Subalternative

Modify Actinide Packaging and Storage Facility for Continued Plutonium Storage

Under this alternative, the RFETS non-pit material would be transferred to SRS. An addition to the APSF to accommodate the RFETS non-pit material would require up to 193 workers and take four months to complete. This construction project may be performed as an extension of work already being conducted under No Action. Under this scenario, there would be no additional socioeconomic impacts over the No Action level because the workers would already be on site. If, however, the construction of the RFETS non-pit addition takes place some time after No Action construction is completed, there would be some minor socioeconomic effects.

During the operation phase, 160 workers would be employed if the RFETS non-pit material is stored at SRS. However, 30 of these positions would be filled by existing SRS employees. The other 130 positions would be created as part of No Action. Thus, there would be minimal socioeconomic impacts associated with the operation of the upgraded storage facility beyond those that would result from No Action.

Regional Economy Characteristics. A maximum of 346 jobs (193 direct and 153 indirect) would be generated during construction. Total employment would increase by much less than 1 percent during construction while unemployment would drop from the No Action level of 6.7 percent to 6.6 percent. Per capita income would increase by much less than 1 percent over the No Action Alternative (Socio 1996a).

Population, Housing, Community Services, and Local Transportation. All newly created employment would be filled by the resident labor force. Therefore, there would be no change to the region's population beyond the No Action level. Accordingly, there would be no impacts to either the housing sector, or demand for community services as a result of the construction of these facilities. Local transportation would also be unaffected by the proposed action.

[Text deleted.]

Upgrade With Rocky Flats Environmental Technology Site and Los Alamos National Laboratory Plutonium Subalternative

Modify Actinide Packaging and Storage Facility for Continued Plutonium Storage

Under this alternative, all or a portion of the RFETS and LANL material would be transferred to SRS. The upgraded facility would be comparable in size to the upgraded facility described above. Therefore, the number of workers required for construction and operation of the two facilities would be the same. The socioeconomic impacts for the two alternatives would also be identical.

Consolidation Alternative

Construct New Plutonium Storage Facility

To consolidate storage of Pu currently stored at multiple DOE sites, a new storage facility would be built at SRS. Workers would in-migrate to fill a portion of the direct jobs created during construction and operation of this facility.

Regional Economy Characteristics. Construction would generate a total of 2,044 jobs (1,140 direct and 904 indirect). Operation would generate a total of 1,460 jobs (485 direct and 951 indirect). Total employment would increase by less than 1 percent for construction and operation of the facility. Unemployment would decrease to 6.0 percent during construction and 6.2 percent during operation. Per capita income would increase by less than 1 percent over the No Action Alternative during either phase (Socio 1996a).

Population, Housing, and Community Services. Most of the newly created employment would be filled by the resident labor force. There would only be approximately 35 workers in-migrating during operation and no in-migration during construction. Therefore, there would be a minimal change to the region's population beyond the No Action level. Accordingly, there would be minimal impacts to the housing sector or community services as a result of the construction and operation of this facility. [Text deleted.]

Local Transportation. A total of 2,188 and 931 vehicle trips per day would be generated during construction and operation, respectively. During construction, South Carolina State Route 230 from U.S. 25 Business at North Augusta to U.S. 1/25/78/278, a rural two-lane highway, would drop from level of service E to level of

service F. Traffic generated from facility operations would not affect the level of service on the local road segments analyzed (Socio 1996a).

Collocation Alternative

Construct New Plutonium and Highly Enriched Uranium Storage Facilities

To collocate storage of Pu and HEU currently stored at multiple DOE sites, new storage facilities would have to be built at SRS. Workers would in-migrate to fill a portion of the direct jobs created during construction and operation of these facilities.

Regional Economy Characteristics. Construction would generate a total of 2,623 jobs (1,463 direct and 1,160 indirect). Operation would generate a total of 1,818 jobs (614 direct and 1,204 indirect). Total employment would increase by about 1 percent for construction and less than 1 percent for operation. Unemployment would decrease to 5.8 percent during construction and 6.1 percent during operation. Per capita income would increase by less than 1 percent during both phases (Socio 1996a).

Population and Housing. The in-migration of workers during the construction and operation periods would increase the ROI population by much less than 1 percent over No Action projections. The largest increase would occur during construction. Some new housing may be needed. However, expected vacancies and historic housing construction rates indicate that housing would be available to accommodate the population growth (Socio 1996a).

Community Services. The additional population would slightly increase the demand for some community services. Worker in-migration would lead to an increase in ROI school enrollments by about 62 students during construction and 47 students during operation. To maintain the No Action student-to-teacher ratio of 17.5:1, the number of teachers would have to increase by three during both the construction and operation periods (Socio 1996a). This additional need for teachers would be distributed over the various jurisdictions in the ROI; therefore, the effect on any single school district would be minimal.

To maintain the No Action level of service, only one police officer would need to be hired during both construction and operation. To maintain the No Action firefighter level of service, only one firefighter would need to be hired during both phases (Socio 1996a).

The small population increase would have a negligible effect on health services, increasing hospital occupancy slightly greater than the No Action projection. The number of physicians in the ROI would need to increase by only one during construction and no additional physicians would be needed during operation (Socio 1996a).

Local Transportation. A total of 2,809 and 1,179 vehicle trips per day would be generated during construction and operation, respectively. During construction, South Carolina State Route 230 from U.S. 25 Business at North Augusta to U.S. 1/25/78/278, a rural two lane highway, would drop from level of service from E to level of service F (Socio 1996a). Traffic generated from facility operations would not affect the level of service on the local road segments analyzed (Socio 1996a).

Subalternative Not Including Strategic Reserve and Weapons Research and Development Materials

The requirements for each storage option considered, including No Action, would decrease slightly if strategic reserve and weapons R&D materials were not included for storage at SRS. This should also result in a decrease in the number of required operation employees for each of the considered alternatives. Therefore, socioeconomic effects on the REA/ROI for the storage alternatives with no strategic reserve and weapons R&D materials should be equal to or somewhat less than the No Action Alternative, Upgrade With All or Some

RFETS and LANL Pu Subalternative, Consolidation Alternative, and the Collocation Alternative. [Text deleted.]

Phaseout

Phasing out Pu storage at SRS would result in the loss of 592 total (direct and indirect) jobs in the REA. Should all personnel be phased out at the same time, unemployment would increase to 6.9 percent and per capita income will be reduced by much less than 1 percent (Socio 1996a).

Some displaced workers may out-migrate from the ROI to seek other employment opportunities. Under the bounding case (all unemployed workers and their families leaving the ROI at the same time), population would decrease by less than 1 percent. Some of the projected ROI occupied housing units would likely become vacant as a result of population losses (Socio 1996a).

Out-migration of population during phaseout would slightly lessen the demand for community services. However, it is unlikely that communities would lower service levels unless decreased revenues made it necessary.

ROI school enrollments are projected to decrease by much less than 1 percent under the bounding case scenario. The No Action student-to-teacher ratio of 17.5:1 could be maintained if the number of teachers does not decrease from predicted No Action levels by more than 17 (Socio 1996a).

During phaseout, the number of sworn police officers could decrease by four from projected No Action levels if the No Action service level of 2.1 officers per 1,000 persons is to be maintained. The number of firefighters could decrease by five before the No Action service level of 3.0 firefighters per 1,000 persons would be affected (Socio 1996a).

Projected hospital occupancy rates during the bounding case scenario for phaseout would be slightly lower than the No Action projections. The number of physicians in the ROI could decrease by three from predicted No Action levels before the No Action service level of 3.0 physicians per 1,000 persons would be affected (Socio 1996a).

Phaseout at SRS would result in the loss of 384 vehicle trips per day. There would be minimal effects to the local road network due to this activity.